MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no question of impropriety. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Thank you, Sir.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, the point is this. He referred to the ONGC investing in Pawan Hans. Now, the Pawan Hans runs helicopters. Helicopters are needed for Mumbai High and other places. Now, there is investment in Pawan Hans—long back and not now—so that the Pawan Hans can also do better. In the operation of the Pawan Hans, so many helicopters are required by the ONGC. It facilitates the work of the ONGC and also of the Pawan Hans. That is why some sort of investment is there. It is for this purpose the investment is made by the ONGC. That is the purpose.

*104. [The questioner (Shri Anil Sharma) was absent. For answer *vide* page 46. *infra.]*

Research on Himalayan Glacier Hydrology

*105. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleaed to state:

(a) whether an International Group consisting of Scientists from UK, Nepal and India conducting Research on Himalayan Glacier Hydrology has concluded that as glacier system is melting under global warming, water from the Himalayas will make river Ganga monsoon fed;

(b) whether they have also held a view that the proposed linking of rivers will not be viable after 25 years; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) A consortium led by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Wallingford, UK and involving the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Kathmandu, Nepal; His Majesty's Government of Nepal Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Tribhuvan University (Nepal); Jawaharlal Lal Nehru University (India); and the University of Salford, UK has started a project called "Snow and Glacier Aspects of Water Resources Management in the Himalaya (SAGARMATHA)".

The UK Department for International Development(DFID) is funding the three year project, which started in 2001, and the project is in progress.

(b) As per the available information, the results of the project are to be publicised in a series of stakeholders' workshops to be convened by ICIMOD, Kathmandu, Nepal in India and Nepal, early in 2004.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Sir, a reliable and easily accessible database providing historical records for all aspects of hydrological cycle is essential for planning and management of water resource development, particularly for long-term planning and real time management of the resources. The Minister replied that the results of the project would be published in 2004. In the light of this, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to when the Minister has received and what action the Ministry has taken on the national Hydrology Project Document, which is almost similar to the on-going project of the ICIMOD, prepared by a group constituted by the Indian National Committee, on Surface Water, that is, water glacier systems in the Himalayan region.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, as for as the question of getting information is concerned, I would like to say that no information is given to us. But it is supposed to give results of the projects carried out by different international agencies and also by the Government of India's Science and Technology Department, Geological Survey of India and the Water Resources Ministry. Sir, the results of the ICIMOD will be published in early 2004.

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Sir, my second supplementary is, what are the reasons for discontinuing the study on Himalayan Glacier Characteristics, Compilation of Glacier Inventory and Development of Glacier Melt Modelling by using satellite remote sensing techniques by the Indian National Committee on Hydrology? Sir, this is the project for which the Ministry has provided the highest sanctioned amount when compared to other projects.

Part (b) is, of the 38,039 kms. of Indian Himalaya Glaciers, the Ganga Basin has got just 1,020 glaciers. So, how does the Minister justify that glaciers in just one Ganga Basin would meet the water requirements of the entire country because we are not just linking the

rivers in the North or Eastern region but we are linking all the major rivers in the country, including rivers in the peninsular region?

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, India has varied climate - oceanic to continental. We have got high mountains and low valleys also. So, we have got different types of climates in different parts of the country. So far as the river-linking project, which the hon. Member has referred to, is concerned, we are going to think on this proposal on the basis of surplus water during the monsoon season. The problem of shrinkage of glaciers, as the hon. Member has referred to, is not so acute. As per the information that we have received, the shrinkage has been only 1.3 kms. during the span of 43 years. So, there has been very little shrinkage of glaciers. It will in no way affect our projects. It will also in no way affect the running of our rivers.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will not talk about the river-linking project because that is entirely a different and a very controversial project. But what I would like to inform the hon. Minister is : "the glaciers, in the Himalayas, are receding rapidly. It is not correct to say that there is no recession. Just the other day, a very well-known social worker, Shri Sunderlal Bhuguna, from Gangotri met me. He said, that the glacier has receded 23 kms. during the last thirty years, as a result of which all the glaciers and all the streams in the Himalayas are going to be gravely threatend." Will the hon. Minister let us know what steps is the Government contemplating in this regard? The only way you can prevent it, is to afforest the Himalayas, which have been deforested. As a result of global warming and erosion, the glaciers are being destroyed. If the glaciers are destoryed, the Himalayas will no longer be Himalayas, because 'Himalayas' means 'the abode of snow'. If there is no snow, there are no Himalayas. Will the hon. Minister please enlighten us in this regard?

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, I wanted to respond to the question of the hon. Member. But this question should be referred to the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Sir, I would like to say something in this regard. I think, the question raised by the hon. Member is of utmost significance and importance to the entire county. There are reports that

suggest that on account of various factors, for example, global warming, deforestation, increased habitation, movement of people, etc. It has been observed that some of the very important glaciers have receded. This is not a phenomenon that is limited to the Himalayas alone. There are reports regarding shrinkages of ice packs, etc. it is, therefore, a matter of concern for the entire country. Without doubt, the Government is seized of the enormity of this question and challenge; as to what are the immediate measures that can be taken. It is self-evident that without providing a forest cover in the Himalayas that the Himalayas are used to, this denudation will continue. And, this will be detrimental to the country. Then, here is a complex mix of Central responsibility, State responsibility and the social responsibility of afforestation, etc. The Government is seriously addressing all these questions. I can assure the hon. Member that it is not that the Government has not taken note of these concerns.

भारत और पाकिस्तान के लिए हवाई सेवाओं की बहाली

*106. **श्री उदय प्रताप सिंह:** क्या नागर विमानन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच हवाई सेवा पुन: आरंभ करने के प्रस्ताव पर विचार कर रही है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) आतंकवादी गतिविधियों को ध्यान में रखते हुए क्या सुरक्षात्मक कदम उठाए जाने पर विचार किया गया है?

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री राजीव प्रताप रूडी): (क) से (ग) एक विवरण सदन के पटल पर रख दिया है।

विवरण

(क) तथा (ख) दिल्ली में पहली दिसम्बर, 2003 को हुई नागर विमानन पर तकनीकी स्तर की वार्ता के दौरान, भारत और पाकिस्तान दोनों पहली जनवरी, 2004 से पारस्परिक आधार पर सीधी हवाई सम्पर्क-सेवाओं और दोनों देशों से होकर उड़ानों की बहाली करने के बारे में सहमत हो गए हैं। जिसकी वजह से, दोनों पक्षों की नामित विमान कंपनियां पहली जनवरी, 2004 से दोनों देशों के बीच अपनी-अपनी हवाई सेवाओं की बहाली करने के लिए स्वतंत्र होंगी।

(ग) दोनो देशों के बीच हवाई सम्पर्क-सेवाओं की बहाली करते समय नागर विमानन सेफ्टी और सुरक्षा के पहलुओं पर कोई समझौता नहीं होगा।